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By NICHOLAS HUBA

The House of Representatives' Appropriations Subcommittee has earmarked \$600,000 for the ongoing Long Beach Island Beach replenishment project in the Energy and Water Appropriations Bill Thursday.

"Beach replenishment projects are critical for strengthening Ocean County's economy," said Rep. John Adler, D-N.J. "By securing these federal funds, shore communities and businesses will be protected from severe storms."

The goal of the replenishment project is to increase the size of the Island's beaches and dunes. The first part of the project was completed in Surf City.

The next phase of the project is expected to start in Harvey Cedars. In March, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers delayed awarding a contract for the Harvey Cedars section because the borough did not have the proper amount of easements, spokesman Ed Voigt said.

Fifteen of 80 beachfront homeowners refused to sign the easements as of July 2008; since then, that number has dropped to 12. Most of the easements are valued at \$300, borough officials said. Harvey Cedars is currently in the process of working to secure the needed easements.